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AUTHOR Gunn, Evelyn, Ed.
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ABSTRACT

This black American literature course for grades 10-12 is designed to introduce students to the unique contribution that the black American has made to American life. The course guide is divided into four units--Slave Narrative and Autobiography, Poetry, Short Story, Drama--with suggested activites, including class discussions, small group discussions, oral reading, writing, and classroom dramatizations, based on four basal textbooks: "Black Voices," "Three Negro Classics," "A Raisin in the Sun," and "The Sign in Sidney Brustein's Window." Suggested time allotments, unit outlines, sample lesson plans, a teacher bibliography, and lists of relevant films and records are provided. (MF)

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C L E V E L A N D P U B L I C S C H O O L S

BLACK AMERICAN LITERATURE

Grades 10 - 12

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CLEVELAND, OHIO

1969

F O R E W O R D

This course of study in Black American Literature has been developed by the Division of English and Language Arts to present representative Black American literature that presently is not available in literature anthologies. Senior high schools will offer the course as an English elective in September, 1969.

Teachers who developed this guide point out that use of the guide does not require immediate sophistication in the field of black literature. It is not the intent of this course to turn teachers and students into experts in literature by black writers but rather to make teachers and students aware of the superior literature by black writers now available.

It is hoped that this program will be transitional and that within two or three years representative Black American literature will be a regular part of all literature anthologies. We commend the Division of English and Language Arts for meeting an immediate need in the field of Black American literature.

Paul W. Briggs
Superintendent of Schools

BLACK AMERICAN LITERATURE

Grades 10 - 12

CURRICULUM DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

Mrs. Evelyn Gunn, Editor, Glenville High School

Mrs. Mary Grinage, English Department Chairman,
Addison Junior High School

Miss Betty Bonner, Advisory English Teacher

Members of the Black American Literature In-Service
Course, Spring 1969

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

		Page
Introduction to the BLACK AMERICAN LITERATURE Course of Study		
Basal Textbooks		1
Textbook Description		2
Possible Time Allotment		3
UNIT ONE:	Drama	4a - 7
	Introduction to Drama	4a, 5
	Suggested Lesson Plan	6, 7
UNIT TWO:	Slave Narrative and Autobiography	8a - 25
	Introduction to Slave Narrative and Autobiography	8a, 9
	General Discussion Guide	10
	Suggested Lesson Plans	11 - 25
UNIT THREE:	Poetry	26a - 30
	Introduction to Poetry	26a
	Suggested Lesson Plans	27 - 30
UNIT FOUR:	Short Story	31a - 35
	Introduction to the Short Story	31a
	Suggested Lesson Plans	32 - 35
Appendix		37 - 40
Bibliography for the Teacher		37 - 38
Films Available		39
Records for Black American Literature		40

INTRODUCTION

*This is a time of great liveliness, controversy, and creativity in the black literary world in the United States. The pages of Negro Digest month after month reflect the vitality of the black literary scene, and new literary publications are coming forward, like The Journal of Black Poetry and the Broadsides Press, which publishes black poetry. New literary voices are being heard, like those in From the Ashes, the collection of writing by the writers in Budd Schulberg's workshop in Watts and in ex umbra, the magazine of the arts produced by the black students at North Carolina College in Durham."

The black man's image of himself has been a negative one in America. This has resulted in low aspiration levels, although many Negroes are overcoming this handicap. Education, then, has a positive role in helping Negroes to a more positive image of themselves by using literature as a means to this end.

The literature of the black man takes us into the world of black Americans, as seen and felt from the inside. Literature as a way of knowing and perceiving probes beyond the conscious, the fully known, and the fully thought out. With contrast, analogy, imagination, metaphor and symbol, literature searches and captures human hopes, fears, angers, failures, dreams, nightmares and frustrations, which do not register on computer cards, statistical surveys and government reports. There are those who feel that much unrest and turmoil could have been avoided in the ghettos of our large cities, if, the cries of the black man, through his literature, had been heard.

There is still another special insight into American life that we get from black authors: the look and the psychological texture of the behavior of white Americans as it is manifest to black Americans. Here we have an area of great human complexities, of codes of behavior and hidden emotional recesses, of cruelty, guilt, hate, and love. We find what the barriers of separation do to those on both sides of the fence. If, in addition to aesthetic delight, we turn to literature for its power of human illumination, both as mirror and lamp, then certainly the mirror and lamps created by black writers have a special value for America -- if we are ready to look at the truths they expose.

Use of this guide does not require immediate sophistication in the field of black literature. It is not the intent of this course to turn teachers and students into experts in literature by black writers. Its intent rather is to make teachers and students aware of the superior

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*Black Voices - Abraham Chapman
pp. 49

literature by black Americans now available. Objective treatment of the suggested units will fill a void which has existed in the teaching of American literature.

The aim of the Ungraded Black American Literature Course is to introduce students to the unique contribution the black American has made to American life.

The course is divided into four units, Slave Narrative and Autobiography, Poetry, Short Story, and Drama.

The unit on Slave Narrative and Autobiography is based on material in Black Voices and Three Negro Classics, the basal textbooks for the course. The activities include class discussions, oral reading, small group discussions, writing and oral review of biographies and autobiographies by and about Negroes.

The unit on Poetry is based on Black Voices, the basal textbook. Emphasis is placed on expression rather than form. Activities will include writing original verse, oral reading, small group discussions and class discussions. Tapes, films, filmstrips, and recording will be used whenever possible.

The unit on the Short Story is based on Black Voices, the basal textbook. Activities will include reading, class discussions, group discussions and writing. Students should be encouraged to read other short stories by black writers.

The unit on Drama is based on A Raisin in the Sun and The Sign in Sidney Brustein's Window by Lorraine Hansberry. The stress is placed on the universal qualities of the plays. Activities will include oral reading, writing and classroom dramatizations of scenes.

To enrich this course of study teachers may use supplementary plays, novels, essays, short stories, tapes, recordings and filmstrips as they become available.

BASAL TEXTBOOKS

Black Voices. Chapman, Abraham (Mentor paperback) MW 866

Three Negro Classics. Washington, Booker; Dubois, W.E.B.; Johnson, James Weldon (Avon paperback) W 102

A Raisin in the Sun and The Sign in Sidney Brustein's Window. Hansberry, Lorraine (Signet paperback) T 2926

A description of basal materials follows on the next page

TEXTBOOK DESCRIPTION

Black Voices. Chapman, Abraham. This textbook was selected by the In-Service class on Negro Literature as the best anthology available for the course at this time. Black Voices is a varied anthology including well known writers such as Langston Hughes, Richard Wright, Paul Laurence Dunbar, Claude McKay, Countee Cullen and J. Saunders Redding. This anthology also includes some of the newer black voices such as LeRoi Jones, Mari Evans, and Stanley Sanders. The book is organized as follows:

Unit 1: Fiction
Unit 2: Autobiography
Unit 3: Poetry
Unit 4: Literary Criticism

Three Negro Classics. Washington, Booker; Dubois, W.E.B.; Johnson, James Weldon. This textbook should be used with the unit on autobiography. Included in this book are an autobiography, Up from Slavery, an essay, The Souls of Black Folk, and a novel, The Autobiography of An Ex-Colored Man. Since emphasis is not placed on a long work of fiction, interested students may want to read the novel from this book.

A Raisin in the Sun and The Sign in Sidney Brustein's Window. Hansberry, Lorraine. This book contains one of the best plays by a black writer in the twentieth century. Stress is given to the universal qualities of the plays. This text is used with the opening unit.

POSSIBLE TIME ALLOTMENT

Suggested Time	Activity	Textbooks
3 weeks	Drama	A Raisin in the Sun; The Sign in Sidney Brustein's Window
1 week	Supervised Reading	Various paperbacks
5 weeks	Slave Narrative and Autobiography	Black Voices; Three Negro Classics
1 week	Supervised Reading	Supplementary paperbacks
3 weeks	Poetry	Black Voices
3 weeks	Short Story	Black Voices
1 week	Supervised Reading	
1 week	Original projects, tests, etc.	

UNIT ONE: Drama (3 weeks)

INTRODUCTION TO DRAMA

The Negro playwright has encountered more problems than the Negro actor, who was denied entry upon the stage until after the civil war. For years whites in black faces were accepted by audiences. Not until 1920, when several works by such white playwrights as Ridgely Torrence and Eugene O'Neil began to prepare audiences for racial drama, could Negroes participate in writing for the stage.

Although the first plays written by Negroes were fast-moving musical folk plays, or conflict plays, only a few of them dealt with Negroes grappling with their problems. However, the 30's brought to Negro drama the Federal Theatre Project. This afforded the Negro playwrights and actors an opportunity to produce racially mixed dramas.

Soon thereafter, an act of congress eliminated the Federal Theatre, but this did not destroy the desire for theater in Harlem. However, in 1940 came the American Negro Theatre. The most outstanding dramatic production during this era was Richard Wright's Native Son. Even though the American Negro Theatre soon closed its doors, many colleges and universities kept alive the artistry of Negro actors and playwrights.

By the 50's, Negro drama had fully recovered. When Lorraine Hansberry's A Raisin in the Sun hit broadway, it was criticized by some as not being a Negro play, but hailed by most people. It won the Critics' Circle Award as the best play of the 1958-59 season.

Both The Sign In Sidney Brustein's Window and A Raisin in the Sun invite discussion of many of today's problems.

UNIT ONE: Drama (3 weeks)

INTRODUCTION TO THE UNIT

This unit, using the textbook, A Raisin in the Sun and The Sign in Sidney Brustein's Window, has five aims:

1. To be able to identify the contribution the black man has made in drama.
2. To be able to identify the universal quality in the play.
3. To give pupils a greater understanding of themselves and others.
4. To provide reading enjoyment through good literature.
5. To be able to write a character sketch.

The language skills pupils should develop will be in the following areas:

1. Vocabulary building
2. Reading, writing, speaking, and listening

UNIT ONE: Drama (3 weeks)

Suggested Lesson Plan for Act I,

A Raisin in the Sun

by

Lorraine Hansberry

Objectives

To give practice in reading plays; to help each student use and apply what he reads to his own life; to be able to write a character sketch; to be able to identify the universal qualities found in the black man's literature; to be able to identify by name a play by a black writer.

Skills to Develop

Tracing character motivation and development. Understanding characters through dialogue and actions. Visualizing stage settings.

Presentation

Have one student read aloud "Harlem" by Langston Hughes at the beginning of the play. Explain the terms "deferred" and "fester." Have students put into their own words what Hughes is saying. Show how Miss Hansberry got the title of the play.

Motivate students by asking the following questions:

1. What dreams of yours have been deferred?
2. How did this affect you?
3. What happens when people cease to dream?
4. How does money change people?
5. How much should a wife support a husband?

UNIT ONE: Drama (3 weeks)

Presentation (continued)

NOTE: Teachers may use their own questions. You may ask students if they saw movie version of play and what was their opinion of it.

Ask for volunteers to read parts. A narrator may be assigned to read italics. Chairs should be arranged, as much as possible, to fit scenes. Have students read Act I, Scene I, orally.

Understanding the Play

1. What dream does "Mama" have?
2. What are Walter Lee's dreams?
3. What is Ruth's dream?
4. Are you reminded of someone you know from the characters?
5. In what sense is Lena the "head of the house"?
6. Is Beneatha's philosophy expressed by anyone you know? How?
7. How is Walter presented in Act I, Scene I?

Paragraph Theme

From the information provided by Mama Younger, write a character sketch of Big Walter.

This plan may be used to some degree with the remainder of the play. The teacher might want to delay the writing activity until the end of each act and might wish to apply other themes.

UNIT TWO: Slave Narrative and Autobiography (5 weeks)

INTRODUCTION TO SLAVE NARRATIVE AND AUTOBIOGRAPHY

In its early stages, nonfiction written by Negroes was largely autobiographical; it later included biographical works. Autobiographical prose by Negroes appeared as early as 1760. Frederick Douglass' My Bondage and My Freedom and Life and Times of Frederick Douglass are two of the mid-century prose that complete the meaning of American culture. Up From Slavery, the autobiography of Booker T. Washington, tells of the illegitimate son of a white man and a Negro slave and his struggle for education for himself and his people.

In 1903 W.E.B. DuBois published The Souls of Black Folk, a sociological document, which took issue with the ideas of Booker T. Washington.

Although James Weldon Johnson's, The Autobiography of An Ex-Colored Man is a document on the life of the American Negro, it gives his feeling toward the white man and toward his own race.

As John Hope Franklin points out in his introduction to Three Negro Classics, "These three classic and crucial documents in the evolution of Negroes' consciousness of self-key documents, as well, in the development of white society's awareness of the Negro situation -- have never been more timely."

UNIT TWO: Slave Narrative and Autobiography (5 weeks)

INTRODUCTION TO THE UNIT

This unit attempts to show pupils the progress black people have made in America. This unit begins with the slave narrative, the oldest form of Negro literature in America. The unit traces the Negro mood from slavery, through the Harlem Renaissance or Great Awakening to modern writers. This unit has five aims:

1. To be able to identify by name eight black writers.
2. To be able to identify and compare the writing style of two authors.
3. To be able to identify at least four conditions of slavery.
4. To be able to identify with various authors through written and oral expressions.
5. To be able to identify facts about the lives of various authors.

GENERAL DISCUSSION GUIDE

The following questions might be used with the biography unit as well as with the selected individual reading during this unit.

1. What specific contributions of the Negro to the American culture are represented by this author?

2. What view does the Negro have of himself? What events in the book contribute to this attitude?

3. What problems of the Negro, as discussed in the book, are common to all Americans?

4. What is each character's most outstanding personality trait? Cite evidence from the book to support your claims.

5. How does the main character achieve his goal?

UNIT TWO: Slave Narrative and Autobiography (5 weeks)

Suggested Lesson Plan for Chapter One of

Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass, An American Slave

Basal Text — Black Voices, edited by Abraham Chapman

Objectives

To be able to identify by name the author of a slave narrative

To be able to identify an author's style of writing by citing examples

To be able to identify by name four adverse affects of slavery.

Type of Reading — Autobiography (pages 231 - 353)

Presentation

Play the recording "The Douglass Years" to class. (This is available at many high school libraries). To give students the "feel" of the narrative, read several paragraphs aloud. Begin class discussion by asking the following questions:

1. What are the circumstances surrounding Douglass' birth?
2. Describe Douglass' parents. Be specific.
3. What does Frederick remember about his parents?
4. Which slaves, according to Douglass, suffered the greatest hardships? Why?
5. Who was Mr. Plummer?

UNIT TWO: Slave Narrative and Autobiography (5 weeks)

Presentation (continued)	6. Describe the whipping of Aunt Hester. 7. What effect does this experience have on Frederick? 8. Why hasn't he been exposed to this kind of brutality before?
Author's Style	To introduce students to Douglass' style of writing, point out sentence structure and vocabulary. (His sentences are short and vocabulary simple.) Let students read several of the more descriptive paragraphs aloud.
Paragraph Theme	What bad features would a modern psychologist find with Frederick Douglass' limited relationship with his parents, especially his mother?
Assignment	Assign Chapter VI for next class. Teachers should have mimeographed questions from this chapter for students to use as a guide.
Additional Aids	Many students might be interested in other books about and by Douglass. The Life and Times of Frederick Douglass (New York: Pathway Press, 1941) might be recommended. It deals particularly with his escape from slavery. This approach can be used to some degree with other assignments.

UNIT TWO: Slave Narrative and Autobiography (5 weeks)

Suggested Lesson Plan for the first Episode of "Along This Way" - Johnson

Objectives

1. To be able to identify by name three of the contributions James W. Johnson made to Negro American Literature and culture.
2. To be able to compare in several paragraphs the early childhood of Fred Douglass with James W. Johnson.
3. To be able to identify Johnson's style of writing.

Presentation

Have a student with a good reading voice read "The Creation" (pp. 364 of Black Voices). Do not analyze poem, just discuss it purely for its beauty. Then introduce students to Johnson.

Short Quiz (True-False)

1. James Weldon Johnson was born on a plantation in Jacksonville, Florida, after the Civil War.
2. Johnson, instead of having a black mammy, had a white one.
3. This happened because his mother had to work in the fields with other slaves.
4. Johnson's mother visited a white church in Jacksonville and was invited to join its choir.
5. Johnson's father earned his first and second degrees from Atlanta University.

Discussion Topics

1. Describe Johnson's childhood home in Jacksonville.
2. What events led to his having a white mammy?
3. Why doesn't he boast of having had one?

UNIT TWO: Slave Narrative and Autobiography (5 weeks)

Discussion Topics (continued)

4. Johnson says of his mother, "Racially she continued to be a nonconformist and a rebel." Cite several instances to substantiate that statement.
5. Describe Johnson's father. Be specific.
6. What quality in his father impressed him most?

Paragraph Theme

Compare the early years of James Weldon Johnson with those of Frederick Douglass. In what ways are they different? Similar? Find examples to support your statements.

Author's Style

Discuss sentence structure and vocabulary. Have students read aloud several passages where he is quite descriptive. Find other examples in the story that illustrates his style.

UNIT TWO: Slave Narrative and Autobiography (5 weeks)

Suggested Lesson Plan for Chapter One of "The Ethics of Living Jim Crow: An Autobiographical Sketch"

Objectives

1. To teach an appreciation of Richard Wright's early life.
2. To be able to write several paragraphs about the development of Wright's adjustment to life as a Negro.
3. To be able to identify Wright's style of writing.

Understanding the Facts

1. When does Wright receive his first lesson in how to live as a Negro?
2. How were cinders fine weapons, according to Wright?
3. What event made him fully realize the "appalling disadvantages of a cinder environment"?
4. What effect did the cinder incident have on Wright?

Discussion Topics

1. What is your reaction to Wright's mother after the cinder incident?
2. Put into your own words the meaning of Jim Crow.
3. What good fortune does Wright have by moving to Mississippi? Why?
4. Do you agree with the advice given Wright by his parents after the incident with Morrie and Pease? Why? What other advice might his parents have given?

Paragraph Themes

1. What does the title, "The Ethics of Living Jim Crow" say to you about the personality of Wright?

UNIT TWO: Slave Narrative and Autobiography (5 weeks)

Paragraph Themes (continued)	2. Do you think it is possible to keep one's manhood when one receives pressure from both sides? Why?
Author's Style	Wright is quite descriptive. Sentence structure is short and simple. Note how he gives reality to his characters through the use of dialect.

UNIT TWO: Slave Narrative and Autobiography (5 weeks)

A Suggested Lesson Plan for Chapter One of "No Day of Triumph" - Redding

Objectives

1. To teach an appreciation of Redding's life.
2. To develop an understanding of the style of J. Saunders Redding.
3. To be able to draw conclusions.
4. To be able to identify in words Redding's childhood.
5. To be able to understand and use figurative language.

Understanding the Facts

1. When does Redding become conscious of his environment?
2. What was the power that "turned the wheel" of his inner family life?
3. Where did Grandma Redding live?
4. Describe Grandma Redding.
5. How did Grandma Redding receive her limp?
6. Why is she so full of hate?

Discussion Topics

1. From the first paragraph what kind of childhood did Redding have?
2. How does Redding let the reader know that his father is educated?

Author's Style

Point out to students how Redding uses figurative language (cold silence, as coldly furious as the whine of a short) etc. Notice his use of dialect to show some of character of Grandma Redding.

UNIT TWO: Slave Narrative and Autobiography (5 weeks)

Suggested Lesson Plan for

"Autobiographical Notes" - Baldwin

Objectives

1. To teach an understanding and an appreciation of James Baldwin.
2. To introduce students to Baldwin's style of writing.
3. To be able to write a paragraph from a quotation by James Baldwin.
4. To be able to write several paragraphs discussing students' interests.

Understanding the Facts

1. Where was Baldwin born?
2. How old was he when this selection was written?
3. Describe some of the jobs held by Baldwin before his middle twenties.
4. What are some of the difficulties in being a Negro writer?
5. What are some of Baldwin's interests?

Discussion Topics

1. Do you agree with Baldwin about the black man's heritage?
2. What has the American Negro been forced to hide according to Baldwin? Is this true of you?
3. What was the relationship between Baldwin and his brothers and sisters?

UNIT TWO: Slave Narrative and Autobiography (5 weeks)

Composition Theme	1. In several paragraphs, discuss what Baldwin meant when he said, "If you don't know my name, you don't know your own." 2. In several paragraphs discuss your present interests.
Author's Style	Notice the elements of humor. Discuss understatement. How does Baldwin use it? Have students read the first paragraph and analyze the dry humor.

UNIT TWO: Slave Narrative and Autobiography (5 weeks)

Suggested Lesson Plan for Chapter One of

"Why I Returned" - Bontemps

Objectives

1. To teach an appreciation of Bontemps' life.
2. To teach an appreciation of Bontemps' style.
3. To be able to write several paragraphs on the presentation of the Negro heritage.

Understanding the Facts

1. Where was Bontemps born?
2. What significance did Bontemps attach to a nickname?
3. Describe Bontemps' father. Be specific.
4. Who was Buddy?
5. What were the two opposing attitudes toward the roots of the Negro as expressed by Bontemps' father and Buddy?
6. Where does Bontemps find himself during the Depression?
7. After leaving Alabama, where does Bontemps go?
8. Explain what Bontemps meant by the statement, "We had fled from the jungle of Alabama's Scottsboro era to the jungle of Chicago's crime ridden South Side . . . ."
9. Why does Bontemps go to Fisk University?
10. What reasons does Bontemps give for staying in the South? Do you think this is a valid reason?

UNIT TWO: Slave Narrative and Autobiography (5 weeks)

Discussion Topics	1. Why do you think Bontemps was surprised at the condition of the house where he was born? 2. From the first few paragraphs, what is his attitude toward the South?
Paragraph Theme	Explain in several paragraphs why you do or do not feel that, "The Southern Negro's link with his past seems worth preserving."
Author's Style	Point out to students Bontemps'use of poetry and the way the autobiography is divided.

NOTE: The class might be interested in the WBOE tape that was made of Arna Bontemps when he visited Cleveland.

UNIT TWO: Slave Narrative and Autobiography (5 weeks)

Suggested Lesson Plan for Chapter One of

"The Autobiography of Malcolm X"--
with Alex Haley

Objectives

1. To teach an appreciation for the early life of Malcolm X.
2. To be able to identify the writing style of Alex Haley.
3. To be able to identify what Malcolm feels are the horrors of welfare.

Understanding the Facts

1. Who was Malcolm's father? Describe him.
2. What influenced Malcolm's father to become a follower of Marcus Garvey?
3. Who was Marcus Garvey?
   (This can be given as an oral assignment)
4. What prophecy does Malcolm make early in the autobiography?
5. What vision does Malcolm's mother have?
6. What happens to Malcolm's father?
7. What had been Malcolm's father's attitude toward buying on credit? Do you agree? Why?
8. How does Malcolm get into trouble at an early age?
9. Describe the Halloween night incident.
10. What did Malcolm mean when he said that the state welfare "destroyed" their home?

UNIT TWO: Slave Narrative and Autobiography (5 weeks)

Understanding the Facts (continued)

11. What lesson did Malcolm learn from rabbit hunting with the old men?
12. What eventually happens to Malcolm's mother?
13. How long does she remain in the hospital?
14. What effect does this have on Malcolm X?
15. Why doesn't Malcolm talk freely about his mother?
16. What relationship does Malcolm have with his brothers and sisters after the separation?

Discussion Topics

1. What reason does Malcolm give for not visiting his mother after 1952? Is this, in your opinion, a valid reason?
2. Malcolm states that, "a state social agency destroyed his family." Why do you agree or disagree with this? What could have been done to keep the family together?

Author's Style

1. How does Haley capture the attention of the reader? (Note title of chapter one.) Have students read aloud the first paragraph and note how he intrigues the reader. Note use of sarcasm through Haley's quotations.

UNIT TWO: Slave Narrative and Autobiography (5 weeks)

Suggested Lesson Plan for

"I Never Escape the Ghetto" - Sanders

Objectives

1. To be able to write a paragraph explaining a given quotation.
2. To be able to identify 3 facts about the early life of Stanley Sanders and to show the style of Sanders.
3. To demonstrate to students that a meaningful career in a ghetto is possible.
4. To give a picture of Watts in mid' 60's.
5. To be able to identify an autobiographical article.

Discussion Topics

1. According to Sanders, how is the black ghetto a transient status?
2. Why was Sanders considered one of the lucky ones?
3. Why was a career in Watts a personal ambition for Sanders?
4. What does Sanders do to escape the stigma of Watts?
5. What changes occured during Sanders' two years at Oxford?
6. In what sense was Sanders the archetype of the ghetto child?
7. Describe Watts in 1965.
8. What was Sanders' first reaction to the riot?
9. Explain why Sanders felt that riots were helpful. Do you agree with this thinking?
10. Explain Sanders' affectionate ties to Watts.
11. What were the logical ties for Sanders staying in Watts.
12. What was life like in England for black people?

UNIT TWO: Slave Narrative and Autobiography (5 weeks)

Paragraph Theme	In several paragraphs, explain what Sanders meant by . . . ."The life of a black man in Watts is larger than a federal poverty program."
Author's Style	Discuss with students the difference between an autobiography and an autobiographical article. His sentences are short, simple. This article is easy to read.

NOTE: This article appeared in special issue of Ebony (August, 1967). This issue could be useful in class along with this lesson.

UNIT THREE: Poetry (3 weeks)

INTRODUCTION TO POETRY

In Arna Bontemps' introduction to his Negro American Poetry, he writes, "The poetry of the American Negro sometimes seems hard to pin down. Like his music, from spirituals and gospel songs to blues, jazz and bebop, it is likely to be marked by a certain special riff, an extra glide, a kick where none is expected, and a beat for which there is no notation. It follows the literary traditions of the language it uses, but it does not hold them sacred. As a result, there has been a tendency for critics to put it in a category by itself, outside the main body of American poetry.

'But Negroes take to poetry as they do to music. In the Harlem Renaissance of the twenties poetry led the way for other arts. It touched off the awakening that brought novelists, painters, sculptors, dancers, dramatists, and scholars of many kinds to the notice of a nation that had nearly forgotten about the gifts of its people. And almost the first utterance of the revival struck an arresting new note:

> "'I've known rivers ancient as the world and older
> than the flow of human blood in human veins.'"

During the same era, Claude McKay's Harlem Shadows was published; and it wasn't long before Jean Toomer began his literary experimentation.

UNIT THREE: Poetry (3 weeks)

INTRODUCTION TO POETRY - Continued

Another central figure of the Negro Renaissance was Countee Cullen. Keats is acknowledged as an influence on the style of Cullen's writings.

Although Phillis Wheatley and Jupiter Hammon stand out in the history of Negro poetry, Paul Laurence Dunbar was the first Negro poet to win any national recognition in America. Dunbar gained recognition with several volumes of lyrics, including such poems as "Dawn," "The Party," and "We Wear The Mask."

The literary explosion of the twentieth century brought into American Literature the early works of such writers as James Weldon Johnson, W. E. B. DuBois, Claude McKay, Arna Bontemps, Langston Hughes, Mari Evans, LeRoi Jones, and many others listed in Black Voices.

UNIT THREE: Poetry (3 weeks)

Basal Text — Black Voices, edited by Abraham Chapman

Objectives

1. To be able to identify by name four black poets.
2. To be able to write several paragraphs comparing two poems with similar themes.
3. To be able to identify figurative language through use in a paragraph.
4. To be able to identify and compare the two techniques of writing used by Dunbar. (dialect or "plantation tradition" and literary English)

Type of Reading — Poetry

SUGGESTED LESSON PLAN

Vocabulary — Review literary terms which are applicable to a unit on poetry beginning with imagery.

Presentation — Spend several minutes giving students some historical background on poetry written by blacks. This can be done in form of oral reports by students on such poets as Lucy Terry, Jupiter Hammon and Phillis Wheatly. Introduce them to Dunbar by giving them the following facts:

UNIT THREE: Poetry (3 weeks)

Presentation
(continued)

1. Dunbar was born and educated in Dayton, Ohio
2. Dunbar was the first black poet to win national recognition and full acceptance in America.
3. He began writing verse as a youth.
4. He held several positions as a high school student -- editor in chief of his school newspaper, president of the literary society and class poet.
5. His first book of poems, Oak and Ivy (1893) was distributed and sold by the poet.
6. His book, Lyrics of Lowly Life (1896) with an introduction by William Dean Howells made him a celebrity.

Have several students read, "We Wear the Mask" aloud to the class. You may have three different students read each stanza. As students read, discuss any vocabulary problems that might arise. Ask students to explain in their own words what Dunbar is saying.

Class Discussion

Begin class discussion by asking the following questions:
1. Who are the "We" in the poem?
2. What is meant by "mask"?
3. Explain what Dunbar means by, "This debt we pay in human guile."
4. What is happening to the Negro as he smiles?
5. What is meant by lines 12 and 13 of the poem?
6. What stereotype of the Negro is represented here?

UNIT THREE: Poetry (3 weeks)

Extending Language Skills

1. In several paragraphs, compare "We Wear the Mask" with Claude McKay's "Harlem Dancer." In what ways are the two poems similar, different? Cite examples. What general theme is present in both poems?

2. Have a student that is good in reading dialect read "The Party" by Dunbar. Show how Dunbar uses the "plantation tradition" on which much of the fame of his poetry rested.

UNIT THREE: Poetry (3 weeks)

Suggested Lesson Plan II

Another possible way of teaching the unit on poetry is to arrange the poems into thematic units. Use themes that appeal to your pupils. One possible theme, together with selected poems, are listed below.

MATERIALS

Poems	Author	Page
"Aunt Jane Allen"	Fenton Johnson	371
"Booker T. and W. E. B."	Dudley Randall	470
"The Ballad of Joe Meek"	Sterling Brown	414
"Robert Whitmore"	Frank Davis	435
"Theme for English B"	Langston Hughes	429
"Her Story"	Naomi Madgett	477
"We Real Cool"	Gwendolyn Brooks	465
"The Scarlet Woman"	Fenton Johnson	370

Theme 1 - PEOPLE

First read "The Ballad of Joe Meek" and then read "Aunt Jane Allen." Compare the techniques and effects of the two poems.

Next read a group of poems that suggest a story in a character sketch: Davis's "Robert Whitmore," Naomi Madgetts' "Her Story." Have students write a paragraph describing one of the above characters.

Have several pupils that read well read Brooks' "We Real Cool," and Johnson's "The Scarlet Woman." Discuss how Brooks and Johnson paint a picture of a groups of people.

NOTE: Other themes that have special interest to a teacher's class might be used. Some examples are Courage, Death, Love and Friendship.

UNIT FOUR: Short Story (3 weeks)

INTRODUCTION TO THE SHORT STORY

Slaves were the first makers of Afro-American legend and myth. They retold and adapted the many tales their fathers had brought from Africa. These stories were about heroes -- animal and human whose character traits were well known to the listeners. They revealed the dreams and aspirations of the black men of America. Since many of these were imaginative and different from the Anglo-Saxon traditions, they were added to the American culture.

During this era, folk tales were circulated orally. The development of short stories written by Negroes proceeded very slowly for many reasons. The most obvious reason was that only a few Negroes knew how to write, and many southern states did not allow education of black Americans.

It was more than twenty years after the Emancipation Proclamation that the first short story appeared in The Atlantic Monthly. This story was written by Charles Waddell Chesnutt, who was a native Clevelander. Chesnutt passed the Ohio bar examination and worked for years as a legal stenographer in Cleveland. Even though The Atlantic Monthly continued to publish Chesnutt's work, the editor avoided identifying the writer as a Negro.

By the late forties and fifties, the list of significant short story writers grew tremendously. The most prominent are probably the ones listed in Black Voices, Jean Toomer, Rudolph Fisher, Arna Bontemps, Ralph Ellison, Langston Hughes, Richard Wright, James Baldwin, and others.

UNIT FOUR: Short Story (3 weeks)

Basal Text — Black Voices, edited by Abraham Chapman

Objectives

1. To be able to identify by name the first black author to perfect the short story form.
2. To be able to write several paragraphs accepting or rejecting a given philosophy.
3. To be able to identify the term, allusion, and how the author uses it in this story.

Type of Reading — Short Stories

Skills and Concepts

Responding to the story:
- Interpreting title
- Determining theme
- Grasping implications

Recognizing the writer's skill:
- Characterization
- Language and word choice
- Logical endings

UNIT FOUR: Short Story (3 weeks)

Model Lesson Plan for

"Baxter's Procrustes" - Chesnutt

Terms

Review the terms that are necessary in undstanding the short story. These terms may be given in vocabulary exercises before the teacher begins this unit or as she progresses in the unit.

Presenting the Story

Have several students read the first few paragraphs aloud. The teacher will possibly have to stop to explain who several of the authors are. No definite date or place is given for setting. We can assume that the story takes place around the later 1800's or early 1900's. (The club had entertained Mark Twain) Note that the story is told in the first person and Baxter is the main character.

Vocabulary

1. rubrication, p. 56
2. consternation, p.54
3. coterie, p. 55
4. hypothesis, p.54
5. remuneration, p. 56
6. enigmatical, p.58

Introducing the Author

1. Stress the fact that Chesnutt was born in Cleveland.
2. He is considered the first Negro writer to master the short story form and the craft of fiction.

UNIT FOUR: Short Story (3 weeks)

Introducing the Author (continued)

3. He established a national literary reputation as a novelist and short story writer before his death.
4. His race was kept a secret for nearly a decade by the editor of The Atlantic Monthly.
5. Chesnutt studied law and passed the Ohio bar examination, but he never practiced law; he became a legal stenographer instead.
6. "Baxter's Procrustes" was written for The Atlantic Monthly in June, 1904.

Understanding the Story

1. What was the main interest of the members of the Bodleian Club?
2. Where did the club get its name?
3. Name several literary figues that the club had entertained.
4. Relate what happened at the club on the anniversary of Sir Walter Raleigh's death.
5. What happens at the club once or twice a year.
6. Describe Baxter.
7. How did the members of the Bodleian Club first get the notion of publishing 'Baxter's Procrustes?'
8. What was Baxter's philosophy of life?
9. Why did the club members refrain from reading the poem?
10. Describe the paper and the cover of the Procrustes.
11. How did the members of the club discover that they had been duped?
12. What explanation does Baxter give for deceiving the members? Is it a logical one?
13. What finally happens to Baxter?
14. What does the president of the club finally conclude about Baxter?
15. What does the title mean?

UNIT FOUR: Short Story (3 weeks)

Developing Language Skills

1. Define the term, allusion. Discuss in several paragraphs how Chesnutt uses allusion in this story.
2. Baxter's philosophy was, "Society was the Procrustes which, like the Greek bandit of old, caught every man born into the world, and endeavored to fit him to some preconceived standard, generally to the one for which he was least adapted." In several paragraphs, tell why you agree or disagree with that philosophy.

Suggested Reading

Students who enjoyed this story might like to read "The Goophered Grapevine", a tale of Negro folk psychology, and "The Sheriff's Children" by Charles Chesnutt.

A P P E N D I X

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A new periodical that should be of interest to all English teachers is the NEGRO AMERICAN LITERATURE FORUM. Subscriptions may be obtained for $2.00 per year from:

John F. Bayliss
Department of English
Indiana State University
Terre Haute, Indiana 47809

(Make checks payable to Indiana State University)

FILMS AVAILABLE

Booker T. Washington (18 min.)

Frederick Douglass (48 min.) Gwendolyn Brooks (30 min.)

The House on Cedar Hill (16 min.)

Malcolm X: Struggle For Freedom (22 min.)

Martin Luther King, Jr.: A Man of Peace (28 min.)

My Childhood: Part I, Hubert Humphrey's South Dakota; Part II, James Baldwin's Harlem (51 min.)

Omowale: The Child Returns Home (30 min.)

The Story of Dr. Carver (10 min.)

The Weapons of Gordon Parks (30 min.)

Ralph Ellison on Work in Progress (29 min.)

(All films listed above may be obtained through the Cleveland Public Library.)

TAPES

"Arna Bontemps Reads Poetry - Part I"
"Arna Bontemps Reads Poetry - Part II"

(These tapes are available through Radio Station WBOE, Cleveland Board of Education.)

RECORDS FOR BLACK AMERICAN LITERATURE

The Best of Simple - Langston Hughes, Read by Melvin Stewart
Folkways/Scholastic Records, 50 West 44th Street
New York, New York 10036
FL 9789 List price: $5.79

Langston Hughes and Sterling Brown Read Their Poetry, Folkways/Scholastic Records, 50 West 44th Street, New York, New York 10036
FL 9790 List price: $5.79

Anthology of Negro Poets - Negro poets read from their own works
Folkways/Scholastic Records, 50 West 44th Street
New York, New York
FL 9791 List price: $5.79

Anthology of Negro Poets in the U.S.A., Read by Arna Bontemps, Folkways/Scholastic Records, 50 West 44th Street, New York, New York 10036
FL 9792 List price: $5.79

The Frederick Douglass Years, 1817 - 1895 (This is already being used in some schools and is available through the Pepsi Cola Bottling Company, 3209 Chester Avenue, Cleveland 14, Ohio Telephone 431-2300)
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A Hand Is On the Gate - (This record is available in the Radio Station WBOE, Cleveland Board of Education)